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Doomed Planet

"Today's debate about global warming is essentially a debate about freedom. The environmentalists would like to mastermind each and every possible (and impossible) aspect of our lives."

Vaclav Klaus Blue Planet in Green Shackles

Who are the climate denialists now?

by Walter Starck

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In recent years anyone daring to question the imminent reality of catastrophic global warming has risked being labelled a denialist with implicit, and sometimes even explicit, reference to holocaust denial as well. Ironically, over the past year in the face of a cooling climate and collapsing scientific credibility, climate alarmists have themselves begun to increasingly express opinions that can only be seen as denialist.

Even though exposure of the Climategate emails and other material from the University of East Anglia Climate Research Unit was unequivocally a major blow to the credibility of AGW science, warmists reacted by trying to downplay the significance as being only an academic spat with no relevance to the scientific validity of any of the research involved. However, as it became apparent that serious breaches of scientific standards and ethics were involved, basic honesty should have called for a clear condemnation. By opting to attempt to dismiss such serious matters as only trivia, damage to credibility with the public was compounded.

Then, to make a bad situation even worse, investigations that were obvious shams were conducted. Predictably they announced finding nothing of any real concern. Instead of resolving suspicions about a few researchers this only served to widen them to the institutions themselves and even to the government.

At the same time, the Climategate scandal also turned public attention onto various other false or doubtful claims about climate change. The result has been a large increase in mainstream media coverage for climate scepticism and a significant decrease in stories promoting climate alarmism. Unable to effectively refute all of the doubts being presented, the proponents of dangerous warming have responded by ratcheting up the level of proclaimed threats. Without any convincing new data, everything was suddenly claimed to be much worse than previously stated.

For persons purportedly committed to reason and evidence, the response of climate change researchers would be more than a little incongruous. It is however, fully in keeping with the politically correct, postmodern perspective which now dominates in academia. In this view objective truth is only a delusion and basic research a bourgeois elitist indulgence. In environmental research in particular, advancement of basic understanding has been largely abandoned in favour of that having "relevance" to "problems" and only findings which support a politically correct agenda may be publically presented. Even researchers strongly committed to the AGW hypothesis have found themselves viciously attacked for offering opinion or findings not fully in accord with alarmist dogma.

When confronted by reasonable doubts or conflicting evidence, the warmist response has been to refuse debate and to instead proclaim authority, expert consensus and moral virtue while attacking the knowledge, standing and motives of any who question the threat of catastrophic climate change. While this kind of denigration may be an accepted practice in academia, to the broader public it only looks like juvenile schoolyard bullying by adults who haven't grown up. It certainly has not aided the alarmist cause.

Although the climate change bandwagon may appear to roll on unstoppably regardless of all doubts or discredit, it has in fact suffered a serious loss of momentum in public acceptance. It has lost power and is now only coasting while trying to maintain a face saving facade for those so deeply committed that any graceful retreat is unthinkable.

Worse still from the alarmist perspective, has been the painfully obvious failure of climate itself to cooperate. For the past three years all over the world savagely cold winter weather has repeatedly set new records for snow and low temperatures. Time after time global warming conferences have been greeted by record and near record cold weather. Trying to dismiss this as merely coincidence or just weather, not climate, has lost all credibility; especially after it has happened repeatedly amidst a background of extreme winter conditions over large areas. Continuing to offer this increasingly lame excuse has only made it look more like a lie or delusion than an explanation.

Regardless of the ongoing hype and spin of the diehard proponents of AGW, the attitude of a large majority of the electorate has turned decisively against the idea of any imminent threat. This shift in sentiment is unlikely to reverse anytime soon. It developed over time and involves not just the Climategate emails but a much wider shift in the balance of public awareness as well as a sense of betrayal and dishonesty by researchers claiming certainty and righteousness. Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me. Once a belief is abandoned, few people readily return to something they have decided was false. All the spin and hype is now achieving is to exacerbate the discredit. For supposedly intelligent people, this kind of behaviour does not indicate it.

Meanwhile, as the warmists continue their doomscrying and seeking further hundreds of billions of dollars to carry on their vast charade, the whole economic structure upon which everything depends is teetering on the brink of disaster with little effort to address or to even recognise the very real and present dangers which confront us.

All over the developed world, governments have committed to unfunded liabilities and fostered a proliferation of bureaucracy which their increasingly uncompetitive productive sectors cannot sustain. Most are now running on empty with no credit left, no plan B and no apparent recognition that the path they are on leads only to the edge of a cliff.

In the U.S., Japan and most of the EU, government debt and deficits have passed a point of no return and are rapidly escalating. The bailouts and stimulus efforts have only deferred inevitable defaults while making them even larger and more damaging. Taxes cannot be raised without accelerating the economic decline and any meaningful austerity will result in riots and political suicide for the party in power.

There is no painless solution. The situation has developed over decades and will require major reforms as well as long hard effort to correct. Large sectors of many basic industries no longer even exist. Their skills, knowledge and factories are gone and their products are now imported. Much of what does remain struggles to remain profitable while meeting ever increasing government demands and ever growing competition by lower cost imports from developing countries.

In Australia the price of food, housing, utilities and finance are among the highest in the world. For increasing numbers of people the cost of living is becoming unaffordable and all indications are for ongoing further increases. None of this is because of shortages of resources or lack of knowhow. Overwhelmingly, it stems from government policies and demands.

In addition to a deteriorating economic situation, the proliferation of government and bureaucracy has been accompanied by a serious degradation of basic personal rights and freedoms which are the very soul of democracy. It is fundamental to democracy that ultimate sovereignty resides in the people, not the government. However, over recent decades government has increased its power and control to the point that the people are becoming only chattels of the state, indentured wage serfs who will have to toil their entire working life in order to simply pretend to own a home. In reality they will just rent it from the state through payment of exorbitant rates until their sham "freehold" is confiscated either for old age care or via taxes.

Bloated dysfunctional government cannot even recognise, much less rectify, the problems it has created. It has grown into an engorged parasite on the body politic. Until the people reassert their rightful sovereignty, severely prune back government and make it properly subservient, it will continue to drain the vitality of the productive sector until economic collapse must result.

The idea that they will fix things by redistributing wealth is a pathetic joke. The wealth of a society ultimately depends on what it produces. Wealth in private hands can only be spent, invested or saved. Any of these uses results in increased production. Only government pays people to produce nothing, or to produce things no one wants, or to actively interfere with those producing the things that are needed and wanted. Even when it does try to do useful things, government tends to do so inefficiently, poorly and at high cost. Too much government is the problem. More cannot be the solution. No genuine economic recovery is possible unless government is downsized, basic rights restored and the productive sector permitted to function more freely again.

In a world teetering on the edge of economic chaos with a huge population highly dependent on a healthy economy and severe winters not seen since the Little Ice Age, the ongoing obsession with global warming and decarbonisation is surreal. Every day government deficits grow larger. Even with a 100% tax on income, the U.S. government would still be in deficit. Most state governments and many municipalities there are operating in serious and growing deficit. Already the first municipal defaults have occurred. In the EU bankruptcy looms over various member states. Interest on government bonds is having to be substantially increased and even then buyers are becoming harder to find. Serial sovereign defaults and further severe global economic recession seem unavoidable.

In these conditions, the ongoing obsession over AGW is looking more and more like a mental disorder, not unlike the mass manias of the Middle Ages. It seems an especially poor time to be insisting on failed prophesies calling for austerity and increased costs. In the likely prospect of severe hardship becoming manifest, angry mobs may be only too willing to accord full credit to false prophets.

The prayer to the Mayan jaguar goddess Ixchel at the recent Cancun climate meeting seems singularly appropriate to our times. The Mayan gods were a bloodthirsty lot and at least one early Spanish account reports that young women were routinely sacrificed to Ixchel. If the warmists were to have their way and full decarbonisation imposed, agriculture, transport and winter heating as we know it will no longer be possible. This alone should provide a sacrifice of at least several hundred million persons. Ixchel must surely be pleased at the prospect. However, this promise must surely have had more credibility if only the conference had offered a down payment as a show of good faith. If they really wanted to assure Ixchel's favour they could have selected a few hundred delegates to have their hearts removed with obsidian knives atop the great pyramid at Chichen Itza and their bodies tossed down the steep steps. This would have been far more convincing to Ixchel than just beseeching her with dubious promises.

Our large brains provide our species with a remarkable capacity to rationalise whatever benefits us personally and dismiss that which does not. AGW has provided fame, fortune and a delicious sense of moral righteousness to many of those so ardently proselytising for it. Our politico-economic problems offer only austerity and great effort. Unfortunately, repeated experience strongly indicates that there is an objective reality which does exist regardless of whatever we might choose to believe. However ardently we may choose to deny it, it always prevails. How much more of it is going to be needed to make us give up our fantasies and start dealing with it?



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